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SUBJECT: THE UK'S L'AQUILA FOOD SECURITY COMMITMENTS

REF: SECSTATE 120804

¶1. (SBU) The UK has pledged GBP 1.1 billion in furtherance of its G8 L'Aquila food security commitments, Richard Moberly of the UK's Department for International Development (DFID) told ECOUNS in response to reftel demarche. The funds will be disbursed over a three-year period, from April 1, 2009 to March 31, 2012. (The UK's fiscal year starts April 1.) The funds are not new monies, but re-programmed from other assistance projects. Moberly emphasized that the reprogramming of money did not mean in real terms that other programs were adversely affected, since DFID's overall budget is increasing significantly, from GBP 5.8 billion in 2008 to GBP 9.1 billion by 2011.

¶2. (SBU) The UK has not identified specific recipient countries but intends to have as a target 50 percent obligated for Africa, 50 percent for South Asia. Half of the GBP 1.1 billion will be disbursed through bilateral mechanisms; half through multilateral mechanisms, which includes through the European Union and the World Bank. Disbursement through existing bilateral programs is already underway. It is anticipated that 100 percent of the GBP 1.1 billion will be in the form of grants.

¶3. (SBU) DFID has not yet determined who will attend the December 7-8 meeting in Rwanda. Moberly will represent the UK at the December 3-4 technical cooperation meeting in Rome.

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